1: Holmberg--12-13 (1941-42) 1950 Siriono -1-2
116, 462, 323, 415

"The pottery industry is poorly developed, but rude, plain pots (ñéo) are occasionally made by the women. Since more food is broiled or roasted than boiled or steamed, a family rarely possesses more than one pot. [13]

The banks of rivers serve as the principal source of clay. It is dug out by the women with the digging stick and carried home in baskets. In making a pot, the lumps of clay are first mixed with water and with carbonized seeds of the motacú palm which constitute the temper. The resulting mixture is made into balls, from which coils for the sides of the pot are rolled out, and into disks, from which the base of the pot may be formed.

The base is molded, either out of a disk of clay (in case the bottom of the pot is to be rounded) or out of a small coil (in case it is to be more pointed). It is molded entirely with the fingers, and when finished is placed in a slight depression in the ground into which ashes have been put to serve as a cushion.

The rest of the pot is constructed by the coiling technique. After the base has been molded, the coils are rolled out one by one on a mat of motacú palm and applied in turn. In making a pot a woman works the coils of clay together with her fingers, on which she frequently spits. In addition, she employs the convex surface of a mussel shell called hitai to smooth out the clay. After one or two coils have been added to the base of the pot, it is generally left standing to dry for a day before others are added. In this way the pot does not lose shape by having too much weight at the top when the clay is wet.

Thus several days commonly elapse before a pot is complete. Once finished, it is left to dry in the shade for about 2 days before it is baked.

Pots are baked in the hot ashes of an open fire. As each section of a pot hardens, it is turned slightly so as to bake another. To maintain an even heat, sometimes a pot is covered with green boughs and chips while it is baking. Since the method of baking is very crude, pots are very fragile and must be handled with great care. They vary in size from about 5 to 10 inches in diameter at the top and from about 8 to 14 in height."

1: Holmberg--13 (1941-42) 1950 Siriono
116, 462, 323, 276

"Pipes (keákwa), like pots, are made from a mixture of clay and carbonized seeds of the motacú palm. The entire pipe, including the stem, is molded from a single disk of clay, the fingers alone being used. As a woman molds the bowl she leaves at the bottom a small lump of clay from which the stem is later fashioned. After finishing the bowl, she fashions this lump into a conelike shape and then inserts a palm straw into the bowl to make the hole for the stem. She then molds the lump of clay bit by bit around the straw until the stem of the pipe is of the desired length, leaving a little decorative projection at the bottom of the bowl which is called éka or teat.

After a pipe has been molded it is dried in the open air for a couple of days and then baked in the coals of a fire as is a pot. In baking, the straw in the stem is burned out leaving a hole through which to suck the pipe."

1: Holmberg--13 [2] (1941-42) 1950 Siriono
116, 462, 323, 283

"Circular spindle whorls are sometimes made by women from small disks of clay hardened in the open fire as a pipe or a pot is. Before they are baked they are fitted on to the spindle so that the hole in the whorl will be of proper size."

3: Métraux--113 [3] (no date) 1942 Siriono
116, 323, 415

"Pottery. —The Siriono made crude round or oval pots of clay tempered with crushed motacu kernels, which burned out when the vessels were fired leaving the clay porous. Calabashes (Crescentia cuyete) were used for drinking cups."

"Clay vessels, ñu, ñui, spindle-whorls and tobacco-pipes, yagúa, are the only objects that the Siriono manufacture out of earthenware. This work falls to the lot of the women.

It is only the clay of certain localities that lends itself to the manufacture of clay vessels and tobacco-pipes. The woman I saw making a clay vessel--the small vessel in fig. 44--and a tobacco-pipe met with failure when she set about firing the vessel. It cracked in the cooling process. The woman maintained that this was owing to her having taken the clay from a place near Casarabe. The clay from that spot was no good; she was in the habit of taking her clay from a place further away, where it was known to be of better quality. There are many places in the neighbourhood of Casarabe that are renowned for their good clay supply.

The clay is fetched home in lumps the size of a man's fist. It is then moistened and immediately mixed with [93] black, soot-like ashes obtained by burning the fruits of a palm. The substance thus admixed is called taten, or tatava. The potter takes a lump of clay, not quite as large as a fist, and dusts it over once or twice with the ashes while kneading it and working it into a flat cake about 3 cm. thick and with a diameter of 7--10 cm. These clay cakes are put aside on a mat and covered over with leaves, and as soon as a sufficient number of these cakes have been made, the manufacture of the clay vessel begins.

With the point of a knife a small, conical pit is made in the ground, 5 cm. deep and 7

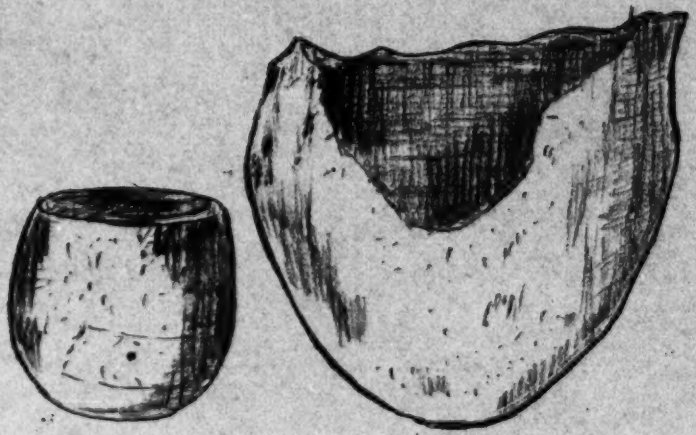

Fig. 44. Two Siriono pots. 1/6.

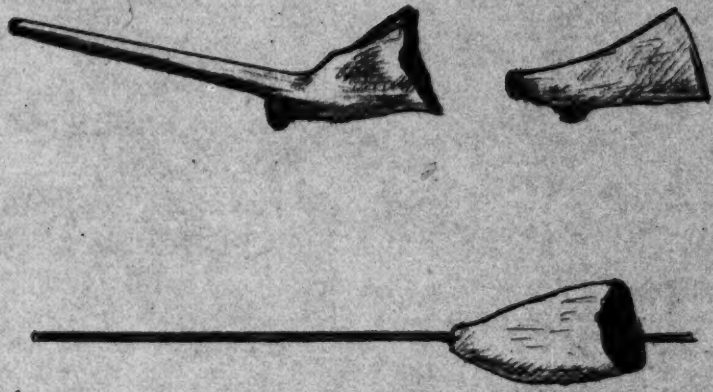

Fig. 46. Two tobacco-pipes and a partly finished pipe. 1/6.

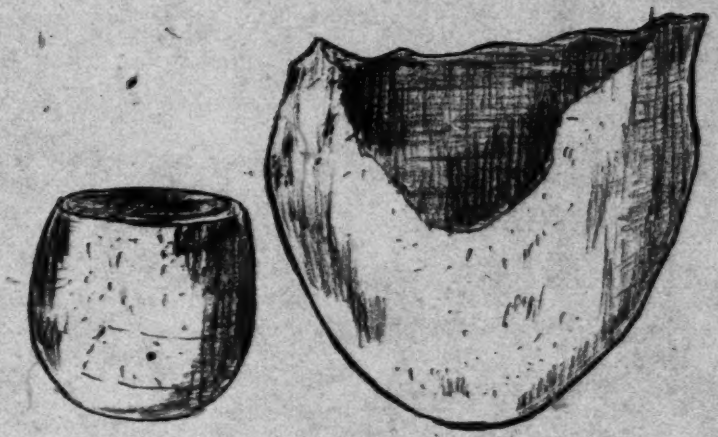

Fig. 44. Two Siriono pots. 1/6.

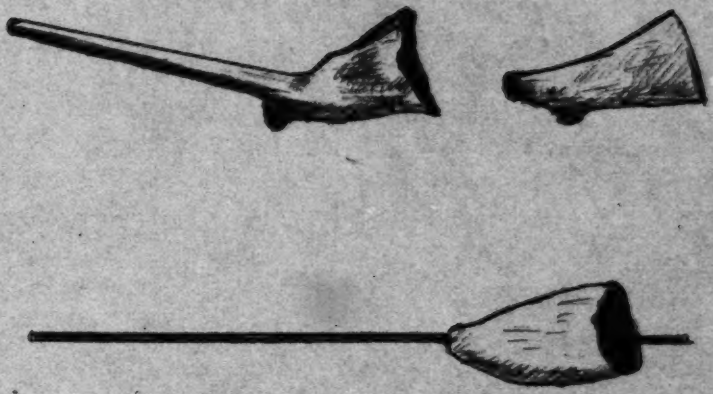

Fig. 46. Two tobacco-pipes and a partly finished pipe. 1/6.

cm. in diameter. The walls of this pit are moistened, smoothed, and strewn with ashes. One of the prepared lumps of clay is formed into a roll between the moistened palms of the hands. This roll is folded up on itself into a spiral so as to form a small conical cup--the bottom of the intended vessel. The wall of the vessel is then built up of similar rolls of clay, laid on one tier or circle at a time. When one or two tiers have been laid, the seams between the rolls are smoothed out while at the same time the clay is squeezed so as to make the walls slightly thinner. The bottom section thus produced is set down in the pit, and the building up of the wall of the vessel by adding more rolls is commenced. As each roll is placed in position, the seam between it and the one next below is smoothed out, while the vessel as a whole is each time worked up. In this way the vessel, from the start rather small and with thick walls, is by this repeated manipulation enlarged and its walls made thinner. The final polishing of the vessel is made with a slightly moistened piece of mussel-shell, íta, or mollusc-shell, urúka.

The vessel is then put aside in the shade, covered over with a couple of large leaves and left to dry for two days, after which it is ready for firing. Five thick tree-branches are placed in the fire, ends together. When they are well alight--or rather, aglow--they are pulled slightly apart, [94] the glowing embers in the centre between the ends of the branches are spread out, and here the vessel is placed, mouth upwards.

The firing is kept up for some hours, care being taken that the heat is even all the time. When the vessel is considered sufficiently baked, the glowing firebrands are

removed, and the cooling process begins. This consists in dipping chips or shavings from the wood of a tree called koroi in water and with them brushing over the vessel. While this cools it, the juice contained in the wood-shavings also stains the ware to a brown or mauve tint. The Indians think this a beautiful colour, but it is not very permanent and soon fades away, especially on pottery vessels. Not long after the cooling process has begun, with the help of a couple of sticks the vessel is lifted out of the fire and placed on the ground to continue its cooling.

The earthenware of the Siriono is of inferior quality. When a vessel has been in use for a time, its outer surface becomes rough and full of cracks, and the life of these vessels is not very long. The fired clay is, moreover, rather porous. The art of pottery is thus on a fairly primitive level among the Siriono."

4: Ryden--96-97 (1939) 1941 Siriono
116, 276, 323

"The clay used in the manufacture of tobacco-pipes is prepared in the same way as that for clay pots. The pipe is formed in one piece out of a lump of clay, which is egg-shaped to begin with. In this, an indentation is first made with the forefinger, so that the clay assumes the shape of a small cup--the pipe-bowl to be. Next, a thin wooden stick of even thinness is pushed through the bottom of the cup, and then the clay of the bottom part is gradually worked over the stick until the pipe-stem is complete in its full length (fig. 46). At the same time the bowl is given its final form in that the small projection that is found on the under side of all Siriono pipes is modelled into shape.

The pipe is allowed to dry with the stick remaining in the stem. It is removed however immediately before the [97] firing. In the firing, the pipe is placed directly among the embers. It is cooled in the same way as in the clay vessels."